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A NIGHT WITH A MADMAN.

It was just such a night as a sailor loves—a night of comparative peace, a soft breeze, an easy sea, and the land an indefinite number of miles on the weather-bow. Our vessel was as tidy a little craft as any in the royal navy, and that is no small boast either. Her name was the *May Bee*, and *may* be she wasn't a saucy one: when we fought, we always won; and I think, too, had we run away, we should have won the race also; at any-rate, in the chase, the slaver never had the ghost of a chance that we drew a bee-line upon. Our cruising-ground was the Indian Ocean, its length and breadth, from the cold waves of the far south, to Aden in the sunny north.

Well, on the present occasion, we were rather short of hands, and of heads too, if officers may be regarded as such; for three of our boats were away on particular service; and, as our engineer was on the sick-list, the fires were out, sail set, and an unusual quiet reigned throughout the ship. It was past eleven o'clock, and our commander had turned in. I could hear him snoring through the bulk-head, for his cabin was right abaft our little ward-room, although in no way connected therewith. My cabin was the only one of those off the ward-room at present occupied, the only other officer on board—saving the engineer—being the assistant-paymaster, whose cabin was outside in the steerage. Into the further end of the steerage led the companion-ladder, so that, in our passage to and from the ward-room to the deck, we had to cross it. I was standing in my little box-like sanctum, preparing to go to bed, when the noise of approaching footsteps in the steerage attracted my attention. Imagining that some one was sick, I hastily threw on my coat, and emerged again into the ward-room, just as Mr Travers, our assistant-paymaster, entered by the other door. He held right in front of him, so as to be hidden from any one behind, a drawn cutlass, which, from signs and motions he made, I understood he meant me to take charge of and conceal. I quickly did so

behind my cabin curtain, and had scarcely accomplished the task, when Mr Wheeler, the engineer, stood in the doorway; and the assistant-paymaster, after pretending to borrow a candle, bade me good-night, and retired.

Now, as I said before, Mr Wheeler was on the sick-list, and had been so for weeks. His disease was one of the worst forms of alcoholic mania; in other words, a bad case of delirium tremens. From one attack he had only recently recovered, being snatched from the very jaws of death. His delusions had been many; but principally he had the idea that a conspiracy was afoot on board, having for its object the harassing of him, Mr Wheeler, in every way, and the final abduction of his body, the binding of the same, hands and feet, and the delivering of it to the deep, to afford food to the sharks. He used to sit for hours in his little mess-room, armed with a knife, yet trembling like a new-born fawn at the slightest noise. Every one, saving myself, he had deemed a foe. The drops of water leaking in through the scupper-holes were water dashed upon him by the maliciousness of the boys; the curtain waving gently to and fro with the ship's motion, was stirred by the hand of a hidden assassin. The captain himself, he had averred, was preparing the hammock in which his living body was to be sewed before he was thrown overboard. Then rows of pale beings had arranged themselves on the opposite side of his room, pointing and gibbering at him, and spouting blood on him; the port opened, and slimy serpents glided in and hid themselves in the apartment or about his dress; his legs would suddenly be clasped as in a vice, and looking down, behold an alligator, with a strange, strange face, crouched beneath the table, embracing him in its horrid arms, blowing its fetid breath in his face, and using fearful threats of death and judgment! Repeated blows with the knife at length dispelled this demon; and then myriads of horrible insects came trooping up over the table, and covered the bulk-heads all around; and 'See!' he had cried to me, 'didn't I see them on deck, springing up like jets of water, and flowing away in streams, those white thick worms!'

and now they were on him, gnawing his flesh, eating his vitals.

'Corruption! corruption!—moribund! moribund!' he shouted, and fell down in one of the worst sort of fits I had ever had the pain to witness. From this fit he had glided imperceptibly into a state of lethargy, from which, after many weary days and nights of watching, I had seen him awake, with pale face and glittering eye, just as he now stood in the ward-room before me.

'What!' said I—'not in bed yet, old fellow?'

'Hush!' he whispered; and by the very look and gesture, I saw plainly that the madness was on him again. 'Hush!' and as he spoke he pointed to the steerage: 'they are there, and—ugh!—it's all so dark—dark and dreary. I could not lie in my berth forward—they would kill me; and Travers stole my cutlass, that I might not defend myself.'

'Come,' said I, 'my good fellow, never mind them. I'll protect you, and fight for you, if need be, to the last. Come forward with me, and turn in to your cot.'

'Nay, nay,' he whispered impetuously, at the same time holding me back; 'not now—not now, doctor; wait till the blessed sun rises. In the dark, I could not wrestle with them, and it will be so very long till morning.—Will it burn?' he added, pointing to the lamp in my cabin.

I nodded assurance; and then he pleaded with such eloquence to be allowed to remain near the light, and to sleep before my cabin-door, that I at last consented, and spreading a mat and pillow for him, bade him lie down. He did so, and before morning I had every reason to repent of my kindness. He then requested me to place beside him a loaded revolver, or at least a bayonet or cutlass, which, having no ambition for a madman to mount guard on me, I peremptorily refused. An hour slipped away, during which time he lay quite peacefully on the mat, sometimes closing his eyes, but only to immediately reopen them, and gaze furtively and fearfully away out into the darkness of the steerage, as if momentarily expecting the attack of an unseen foe.

All was by this time quiet, both fore and aft, in the ship, for it must have been long past midnight. The tramp, tramp of the quarter-master overhead had stopped; even the cockroaches, after a supper of corks, biscuit, port-wine, and blacking, had gone to roost, and the commander had ceased to snore, from which I argued he had fallen into his second and deepest sleep. So there wasn't a sound to be heard, except the creaking of the rudder hinges, or the plash of the wavelets as they rippled past my cabin—a sound that had so often wooed me to sweetest, dreamless slumber, and seemed even now inviting me to rest. Thinking it my duty to remain on watch, however, I had not turned in, but sat on a chair beside my little cot, writing letters home. Presently, 'Doctor,' said my patient.

'I thought you had been asleep,' I answered. 'What can I do for you?'

'Give me a Prayer-book, there's a good fellow,' he said, 'and I won't disturb you again.'

'I would, Wheeler, if I had one,' replied I, 'but you know I've the misfortune to have been born Scotch and Presbyterian; but here is a Bible;' and I handed him the book of books.

He took it, and thanked me, and I went on with

my writing. I was not so much preoccupied, however, as not to perceive that he thrice opened the book, read very attentively, and between each time he prayed—silently, indeed, but so earnestly that the drops of perspiration stood in beads on his pale brow. This brow of his, too, was a very noble one; indeed, he was, when well, not only a manly, good-hearted fellow, but a wise and well-educated gentleman. Thinking that his present frame of mind augured nothing but good, and that there could not possibly be any danger to himself or me—moreover, feeling tired, I closed my portfolio, and without undressing, threw myself on my bed, with the intention of snatching a few hours' repose, if not sleep. I should here mention that I had, only the day previous, purchased from the ship's stores a large clasp-knife, such as sailors usually carry. This knife I had left lying on my little table among the books and other articles.

I could not have been long in bed till I fell asleep, the last thing I remember being groans proceeding from the mat in front of my door. I am a very light sleeper, and used to have continual rows with my servant for shaking me in the mornings, telling him that all he had to do in order to waken me was to enter my cabin, and wink once or twice. How long I slept I cannot say; I believe it must have been fully an hour; but when I did at last open my eyes, I never felt more wide-awake in all my life. I had not, so far as I knew, been dreaming, yet I awoke with a strange and indescribable sensation of impending danger. It was as though a cold, cold shadow had fallen upon or passed over my brain and senses. By the side of my pillow stood Mr Wheeler, and my eyes opened directly on his. I shall never forget the expression on his face; it was not so much that it was dark and terrible—it was the furtive listening expression on it that seemed so strange, almost like a cat about to seize its prey. In his hand, half-raised, he held my own clasp-knife—open!

Our eyes met, and for two seconds, not more, I looked at him, and yet in those two seconds the devil in him was conquered. I have often had reason to be thankful that my wits did not desert me in time of danger, and this time my presence of mind saved me from an ugly death. Had I ventured to spring up with the intention of saving myself, he was a strong man, and undoubtedly would soon have overpowered me. But instead of this, I merely said, in as cool and peevish a voice as I could command: 'Pshaw! Wheeler, man, don't waken a fellow. You'll get the volume in the little book-case.—Good-night; I've to rise early;' and I closed my eyes, not, however, before I had observed the deadly weapon quickly concealed behind his back, and the foolish simpering smile of the dipsomaniac succeed the stern determined glance of the would-be assassin.

'He! he!' laughed the madman; 'I thought—he! he! Oh, here is the book.—Good-night; sound sleep.'

'Yes,' thought I, 'my boy, and a nice sound sleep you were preparing for me.' A feeling of anger at that moment took possession of me, and I felt I almost hated my unfortunate patient.

I had now very little inclination for sleep; and after remaining quiet for a few moments, I began to simulate restlessness; then rubbing my eyes, I sat up, yawned, and said: 'Hang it, old Wheels, couldn't you have got the book yourself, without

rousing me? I can't sleep again now; however, I may as well finish those letters.' With these remarks, I swung myself to the deck, and re-seated myself to write. For some time I looked everywhere, but in vain, for the large clasp-knife with which I was to have been made so intimately acquainted. At last I perceived a little bit of its polished blade peeping out from beneath the mat on which Mr Wheeler had once more thrown himself. 'So, then,' thought I, 'I am a prisoner, and my jailer a madman. Pleasant consideration!' There was little chance of any one coming to my aid. My only hope was, that one of the men might be taken ill—apoplexy, colic, or cholera-morbus. I did not mind what, provided I should be sent for. I was very much in the position of the doctor in the old caricature, praying Heaven to send a pestilence among the people, 'that thy servant may not die of want.' I knew, too, that if I roused his anger or suspicion, by calling for assistance or trying to escape, I should be but as a child in his hands, and he would assuredly kill me. 'If, I thought, 'I could only gain possession of that awful knife;' which I now firmly believed I had been fated to buy for my own execution. How soon, too, might he not, with the sudden impulse common to such cases, spring up, and attack me! It was quite evident now that his Bible-reading and earnest prayers had been meant only as preparation for death. There was thus 'a method in his madness.'

All the strategy I could summon was now directed to the gaining possession of the knife. First, I asked him to accompany me to the steerage, where the dispensary was, for some medicine I told him I wanted.

He simply sneered, as much as to say: 'Do you think me so excessively green?'

'You would be all the better of an opiate, anyhow,' I said. For a moment he seemed to approve of the plan.

'Will you let me help myself to the morphia, then?' he asked; adding, to prevent my suspicions, 'you give so large a dose, you know.'

'Certainly,' I said, my hopes rising rapidly; 'you shall help yourself.'

He seemed to consider a moment, then concluded he would not budge; and my hopes fell again to zero, all the more quickly that for a few minutes after this he was very restless, and his hand frequently disappeared below the mat, where I knew he was fumbling with the knife. At length, a happy thought crossed me, and acting thereon, I got up, laid by my papers, and pretended to begin to undress.

'Oh, botheration,' said I, winding up my watch; 'it has stopped at one o'clock: just give a peep there, Wheeler, and see what time it is.'

Now, in order to do this, he had to get up and stand on a locker, close by, as the clock was fastened to a beam overhead, and on a level with the upper deck. The bait took. With one frightened look at the darkened ward-room around him, he mounted; and, as quickly as I could, I bent down and clutched the knife. Not a moment too soon, however, for he was down from his perch in a twinkling, and at me like a catamountain. With a fearful imprecation, he sprang upon and seized me by the two arms; he then dashed me backwards into my cabin, and down against the chest of drawers. All the nervous excitability of

madness aided his powerful arms, and I felt as if in a vice.

'Tuts!' cried I, forcing a laugh, though a deadly terror was at my heart—'tuts! old Wheels; you hurt me, man; and I want the whittle just half a minute.' And I looked him straight in the face as I spoke.

And once again the devilish look left his eyes, the ferocity died away, and his face resumed the old idiotic grin. Then he laughingly released me, saying, as he retired to his mat: 'You were too much for old Wheels, that time, Scottie.'

'And what,' asked I boldly, 'did you want with the knife?'

'Doctor,' he replied seriously, 'I must retire.'

'Retire! What do you mean?' I inquired.

'Long hath the night of sorrow reigned,' said the poor man; 'the dawn shall bring me rest; and poor Wheeler will die, or the captain will kill him, roll him up in a hammock, and send him down, down among slimy, crawling things and terrible reptiles; and they're all in the plot, and all hate me—all!'

Just then four bells rang out sharp and clearly in the night-air; and for a short time I almost hoped some one might enter the ward-room, and relieve me from my trying situation. Some footsteps on the quarter-deck I did hear—it was but the relief of the man at the wheel; they soon ceased, and all was silent as before. A short time afterwards, the lamp in my cabin began to burn more dimly, and give other indications of an early exit. I hardly knew whether to be pleased or otherwise at this; a struggle with my maniac patient I felt sure I *must* have, and darkness I knew would hasten that event, and bring on the *dénouement*.

'Wheeler,' I said, 'do you not intend to sleep to-night?'

'Ay,' said he solemnly, and starting at my voice like an old lady at a pistol-shot, 'I *will* sleep; and—and you too shall sleep.'

This was certainly not very soothing to my nerves.

'Well,' I continued, 'the light is going out, so you must go to the dispensary and fetch a candle.'

'What!' cried he in a fierce whisper; 'out into the dark steerage, to be torn limb from limb, and my body scattered about the ship by devils. No, no, no!'

The lamp began to flicker.

'See!' said I, directing his attention to it, 'it is waning away fast, and you know well enough how glad they will be to catch you in the dark.'

'Where does the light go to when it goes out?' he asked as if at himself.

'You'll soon know,' replied I.

He started, looked at the lamp, then in my face, and then fearfully around him at the gathering gloom.

'Do not let it out,' he cried. 'For God's sake, doctor, keep it in. Come with me quick, and get a candle.'

I was only too glad to obey. We had not proceeded three steps from my cabin-door, when I attempted to get in advance, in order to make a rush for the companion-ladder. It was a most untimely move. No sooner did he espy my intentions, than all the madman was stirred within him.

'Ha!' he exclaimed, 'wretch! would you leave me to face my fate alone?'

Then seizing me by the breast, he hurled me backwards, and next moment a crashing blow felled me to the deck. He had caught up a double-flint tumbler that stood on the table, and—not thrown it at—but smashed it on my brow. Although blinded and almost choked with blood, still, from this very bleeding, perhaps, I was not rendered insensible; indeed, I was fully conscious. Knowing now for certain that he intended to make an end of me, and most likely afterwards of himself, instead of trying to get up, I did as I had seen the cockroaches do—feigned death, and lay all of a heap just as I had fallen. My grateful patient paused for a moment, and looked down at his work; then stooping towards me, he passed both hands over my face, so as to bathe them in blood, and then held them up to the light.

'Good,' he muttered. '*Red blood—not blue; but I'll mak siccar,* and then, doctor, I'll follow you.'

He then stepped over me, with a light laugh, and re-entered my cabin—for the knife, I knew.

Now was my chance, if ever. His back was scarcely turned, when I bounded to my feet, and made for the steerage. It was a short but exciting race for life. Two seconds took me to the steerage-door, two more to the foot of the companion-ladder. I sprang up, but had succeeded in placing only a few steps behind me, when I slipped, and fell to the bottom, while at the same time I heard an oath, and the cutlass flew past, and stuck in the bulk-head, not a yard above me. The madman, seeing I was escaping, had thrown it; and the fall had saved me. I drew out the cutlass, and hurried on deck. Seeing that the maniac had now given up the pursuit, I paused for a minute to take breath, and bind a handkerchief around my head. It was a very lovely night; not a cloud in all the dark sky, in which the stars—so differently arranged from those in the far north—were shining more brightly, I think, than I ever yet had seen them.

But I had little inclination to gaze long at the gorgeous scene; my thoughts were all on the fearful danger I had just escaped; and, whether from excitement or loss of blood, I could not tell, but I felt as if about to faint. After leaning against the bulwark for a short time, the cool night-air revived me, and I made haste to go to the captain's cabin, to make my report, and get assistance. This report was never made, for just as I was about to descend, a dark figure glided stealthily past, loomed for one moment on the bulwark between me and the starlight, then disappeared, and the plash alongside told me that the unhappy engineer had thrown himself into the sea.

'Man overboard!' I shouted, and the cry was re-echoed, fore and aft, from every part of the vessel. I rushed past the man at the wheel to where, in the stern of the ship, two little brass knobs, like door-bell handles, told the position of the life-buoy. One was pulled, and a gleam of light sprang up; then the other, and the blazing beacon dropped sullenly into the sea. The captain was almost immediately on deck, and the ship was quickly being put about.

'Man the quarter-boats, and lower away with a will. It is earnest, my lads,' he added: 'it is poor Wheeler;' for the men were used to be sent away after the life-buoy on many a dark night, as a species of drill. 'A bottle of rum to each boat,

with an additional one to the boat that picks up the officer.'

They hardly needed such encouragement, for the boats were manned and lowered as if by magic, and were soon swiftly leaving the ship, heard, though hardly seen, and dashing on towards the blazing beacon, that floated nearly a quarter of a mile off. The buoy seemed to be playing a little game of bo-peep with us, at one moment flickering and shining gaily on the summit of a wave, and the next dipping down and hiding from sight behind it. Ten long minutes passed away, and then the light on the life-buoy disappeared—it had burned out, or been put out—and we continued to gaze at the place where the boats had last been seen. A quarter of an hour, then five minutes, and now we could hear the measured thud-thud of the returning oars. As soon as they were within hail, 'Boat ahoy!' shouted our commander, and down the wind came the answer: 'Ay, ay, sir. All's well.'

It was curious to mark the revulsion of feeling in the minds of the men on deck, now that they were assured of the engineer's safety. Before this, it was: 'Poor fellow!' 'God help him!' 'He was a jolly nice gentleman;' 'Mind when he gave us the grog, Bill?' 'That I do, Jack;' &c. Now it was: 'Confound the fellow!' 'He's a fool!' 'He's mad!' 'Serves him right!' 'It'll teach him manners;' &c.

Poor Wheeler was now handed on board, more dead than alive, properly brought round, then placed in his hammock, with a couple of sentries to watch him.

'Where did you find him?' I asked of the cockswain.

'Astride of the life-buoy, sir, grinning like a baboon.'

He never properly recovered till sent to hospital. He told me afterwards that the reason he tried to kill me was, that, being about to take his own life, and considering me his only friend, he wished to have my company through the dark valley of death.

As for myself, my head soon healed, although to my grave I shall carry the scar—the effects of spending a night with a madman.

REVISION, AND ITS DIFFICULTIES.

Few persons who are now talking of the necessity for a revision of the English version of the Scriptures have any idea of the magnitude and difficulty of the undertaking. In modern times, the art of printing has well nigh superseded verbal criticism; for when a book is once issued from the press, the author's words are fixed, and no danger is incurred of words, sentences, or paragraphs being omitted in any subsequent edition, when the author is no longer alive to defend his text. On the other hand, there are no fewer than two thousand manuscripts of the New Testament, some of them as old as the fourth century, and in the very best of them, omissions and variations—due in many cases, no doubt, to the fault of the scribe—are found in considerable numbers. In the New Testament alone, it is calculated that there are about *one hundred and twenty thousand* of these 'various readings,' as they are commonly called; though, of course, many of these are trifling errors, and can be easily detected by

the biblical critic. By the accidental transposition of a letter, or by mistaking one word for another, which only differs from it by one or two letters, the scribe frequently alters the sense of a passage. Not uncommonly a clause, which is undoubtedly genuine, is omitted by the scribe, where the clause ends with the same word or phrase which closed the preceding sentence; and thus the eye of the transcriber has passed over a sentence, being misled by the similarity of the endings. Notes written originally in the margin have been mistaken for part of the text, and thereby interpolated by the copier into it. Such are the kind of difficulties with which the commentator has to contend; and yet many of these errors are not without their value to the critic, for, by a careful examination of them, he is enabled to discover what reliance can be placed on the manuscript which he is collating, and in many cases to determine what manuscripts have been copied from a common source. But besides collating the manuscripts, the ancient versions, of which there are several in different languages of great antiquity and authority, must be carefully compared with our translation from the Greek text; and in the Old Testament, the Targums, which are a version somewhat explanatory, as the word Targum implies in the popular language of Palestine, have to be compared with our English version. The Targum of Onkelos adheres very closely to the Hebrew text, and therefore possesses a very great intrinsic value both in a philological and critical view. The Syriac version of the New Testament is generally admitted to have been in existence as early as the second century, and therefore must have been translated from a copy of the New Testament far older than any we now possess.

There is therefore much more to do than merely to retranslate the text; before that can be done, the text itself must be determined upon. Some idea of the labour required may be drawn from the fact, that the Revision of the Scriptures in King James's time occupied three years; and the number of manuscripts which we have now is so much greater than the number they had in those days, that it is probable that if it is conducted in the same careful way, it will take considerably longer. For, after all, the matter was conducted in a very careful manner. The book was divided into six portions, and each portion given to a separate committee. Each particular man of each company took the same chapter, and having translated it and amended it, all met together; and when they had agreed on any book, they sent it on to the other companies, 'to be considered of seriously and judiciously.'

We are almost inclined to doubt whether any very satisfactory conclusion can be come to about certain passages in the New Testament—as, for example, the Doxology at the end of the Lord's Prayer, which is omitted in certain manuscripts, and about the genuineness of which there is much dispute amongst commentators, each party being equally confident in their own judgment.

It may not be altogether uninteresting to take a hasty glance at the principal manuscripts, from which most probably the corrections will be drawn, after, of course, a careful comparison with the ancient translations of the Scriptures.

The following is a list of some of the chief *Uncial* manuscripts, called so because they are written in

what we should call 'capital letters,' and as opposed to the Cursive manuscripts. The names of the libraries in which they now are, are subjoined: 1. Codex Sinaiticus, St Petersburg; 2. Codex Alexandrinus, British Museum; 3. Codex Vaticanus, Rome; 4. Codex Ephraemi, Paris (Imperial Library); 5. Codex Bezae, Cambridge.

Codex Sinaiticus was discovered accidentally by Tischendorf, who, in 1844, picked out of a basket of waste paper, destined to light the oven of the Convent of St Catharine, on Mount Sinai, a portion of the Septuagint. This the brotherhood let him keep; but, on his inquiring after the remainder, which they told him still existed, he was unable to obtain more than a copy of one leaf. He returned in 1853; but they would tell him nothing about it, and he left the convent under the impression that they had sold it. At the beginning of 1859, he was sent by the Emperor of Russia, the patron of the Oriental Church, to the East; and this most valuable manuscript was then readily put in his hands. He was permitted to copy it at Cairo, and subsequently was allowed to bring it as a present to the emperor.

It is written on the finest skins of antelopes, and the leaves are so large that a single animal would only furnish two; in all, 345½ leaves have been saved, the New Testament being fairly complete.

Codex Alexandrinus may be seen any day in the Manuscript Room of the British Museum. It was given by the Patriarch of Constantinople to Charles I. in the year 1628, and was given to the Library in 1753. An inscription in Arabic, several centuries old, states that it was written by Thecla the Martyr. The Septuagint is complete; but the New Testament has several leaves lost. After the Apocalypse, we find the only copy now existing of the genuine epistle of Clement of Rome. The ink with which it was written has turned a yellowish brown; but the vermillion, in which colour some few initial verses are, still retains some of its freshness. That it was written by Thecla, hardly any one believes; but its date is generally supposed to be about the middle of the fifth century.

Codex Vaticanus is undoubtedly a very ancient manuscript, but no one knows much about it, as it is guarded with such care by the papal authorities, who have attempted an edition of it, but of such a slovenly kind as to be of little or no authority; while other editions which had been published previously are greatly wanting in accuracy. The manuscript is remarkable for the number of omissions of words; it having been calculated that there are not less than 2556 such omissions. As a specimen of the jealous care with which this manuscript is guarded, we may mention that in 1845, Tregelles went to Rome on purpose to consult it; he was allowed to see it, but not to transcribe any of its readings. The following are his own words: 'They would not let me open it, without searching my pocket, and depriving me of pen, ink, and paper. If I looked at a passage too long, the two prelati would snatch the book out of my hand.'

Codex Ephraemi is a palimpsest; that is, the original writing has been destroyed partially by erasure, in order that other works might be written on the same vellum. The ancient writing is barely legible, having been almost completely erased, in order to receive the works of St Ephraem during

the twelfth century. It was partially restored in 1834, by the use of chemicals, but at the same time the manuscript was defaced by stains of various colours. It belonged to the family of the de' Medici, and was brought into France by Catharine de' Medici.

Codex Beza. This manuscript was presented to the University of Cambridge by Theodore Beza, 1581 A.D. It is written in Latin and Greek, but unfortunately the Epistles have been torn out. It is, moreover, full of interpolations (there are said to be six hundred in the Acts alone), and, as Davidson says, 'its singularly corrupt text, in connection with its great antiquity, is a curious problem, which cannot easily be solved.'

The later manuscripts of the Greek Testament, which date from the tenth to the fifteenth century, are written in Cursive characters, and are very numerous. But sufficient has been said about the manuscripts of the Greek Testament to point out to the reader that the task of revision is no ordinary one, and needs England's best scholars to bring it to a successful issue.

With regard to the ancient translations of the Scriptures, we have five Syriac versions, or modifications of versions in Syriac; three versions in the dialect of Egypt; a few Persian versions, the two most important of which are evidently taken, the one from the Peschito Syriac, the other from the Latin Vulgate; the Gothic, which is a translation of the Septuagint version for the Old, and of the Greek for the New—the date of which is about 360 A.D.; and the Armenian, first translated from the Syriac, and afterwards from the Greek. Besides these, there are the Georgian, Arabic, Slavonic, and Anglo-Saxon translations, all of which are of value to the biblical critic.

These versions of the Scriptures in so many languages are permanent vouchers for the genuineness of the Bible itself, and form an important aid to the right interpretation of the text. In the investigation of those various readings which have crept in owing to the repeated transcription of copies during the ages which preceded the art of printing, the value of these early translations must be apparent, as they shew how the passages were read and understood at the time the translations were made; their antiquity is undoubted; their text is far from being corrupt, and many of them were made from older manuscripts than any we now possess.

The Latin Vulgate was an exceedingly early translation, but was altered on different occasions, and finally revised by St Jerome, 384 A.D. It is considered by commentators of very great value. 'So far,' says Etheridge, in his introduction to the Peschito Syriac, 'from its being an instrument for the promotion of popery, we may say, that with the exception of a few passages, which are admitted by learned and impartial men among the Romanists themselves to be blunders or corruptions, a Protestant who is thoroughly read in the Vulgate needs no better weapon by which to vindicate the doctrines of the Reformation.'

Contemporaneous with the earliest Latin translations was the Syriac, which has always been regarded by the Eastern Church as of the highest authority. This version has always been called the Peschito, which may either mean 'simple, that is, literal,' or else 'uncorrupted.' It is a direct translation from the Hebrew of the Old Testament,

and from the Greek in the New. It agrees very closely with the English version.

The English Bible, in common with other works of man, has its imperfections; like every other translation, it may have its occasional inaccuracies. But since the original text itself cannot now, and will never be free from imperfections, the whole blame of such blemishes as may exist should not be cast on the translation. It is also important to notice that, whilst we are crying out against the received version, which is founded on Stephen's text, the American Association have taken that text alone as the groundwork of their labours. Each commentator, now-a-days, has his own crotchets about criticism and manuscripts; and the increased number of manuscripts makes it impossible for any one scholar, however earnest, devout, and painstaking, to produce a text from which a translation may be made more accurate than the one we now have. The very first step in 'Revision' demands, therefore, an agreement among biblical critics which will not easily be arrived at; and unless we can get our best scholars to agree about any departure of importance from the received text, the result will be a translation which will only be received by sects, and not, like the present version, received by those who have left the Church of England equally with those who remain in it.

In any case, no second-hand learning must be brought to bear on such an important work—the manuscripts themselves will have to be consulted, and not merely the transcripts from them, for these transcripts rest merely on the authority of one man, the transcriber or collator.

AMONG THE SALT IN BAVARIA.

BERCHTESGADEN is yet a place little known to the mass of English tourists. The snug Bavarian village, with its pretty white houses nestled in a green and wooded valley, at the head of which stands the guardian peak of the snowy Walzmann, and overshadowed by rugged limestone crags, rising out of the dark pine-trees, is a place of perfect seclusion and great beauty. At this charming spot I arrived early one August morning, and after a consultation with my Bädeler, came to the conclusion that I should best employ my spare hours by visiting the salt-mine.

Most people, I suppose, know that the salt used in England chiefly comes from the mines of Cheshire; but how or where the continental salt is obtained probably is unknown, except to those who have actually made a tour through the Austrian Salzkammergut. The great salt district of Austria lies in a semicircle from the south-east to the south-west of the town of Salzburg. Within this line are the Hallein, Hallstadt, Berchtesgaden (though this is in a narrow strip of Bavarian territory), and other mines. Besides these, there are others scattered throughout the Austrian empire: a small one at Hall, in the north of the Tyrol, and two huge mines at Wieliczka and Bochnia, in the north of Galicia. Many have been worked, and have formed the chief source of prosperity to the locality for generations. The Dürrenberg mine at Hallein, for instance, has been in use for six hundred years;

and every one who has travelled in this part of Europe can recognise the word salt in some form more or less clear in the names of the many villages and towns through which he passes. To the Austrian government these mines are a fruitful source of profit. Salt is an imperial monopoly, and brings in to an exchequer whose credit is one of the worst on the continent, one-seventh of its annual revenue, or about two millions two hundred thousand pounds.

The manner in which the salt is obtained depends altogether on the state in which it is found. If pure rock-salt, or nearly so, it is merely quarried into blocks, and then conveyed to the entrance of the mine. If, however, it is imbedded in earth, clay, marl, or gypsum, the process is more curious and complicated. Galleries are first cut through the limestone rock to the soft beds of salt, where a small chamber is excavated. One set of pipes is then conveyed into this chamber from above, and another set from the chamber to the foot of the mountain. These are closed at the bottom by a valve, which can be opened at pleasure, and are in communication with other pipes or tanks. When these preparations are complete, the water is turned on, and the chamber completely filled. The roof and sides gradually crumble and fall away, the salt dissolves in the water, and the earth and rubbish sink to the bottom. The chamber is kept constantly full; and when the water becomes sufficiently impregnated with salt, which usually happens after a lapse of from three to six weeks, the valves are opened, and the lower set of pipes brought into use. The floor is carefully levelled and hardened, and other preparations being complete, another inundation follows. Every chamber is again and again used, until from some cause, as the partition between two chambers becoming weak, the room is rendered unsafe or valueless. The brine having been brought into the tanks, it is then either boiled on the spot; or oftener, from the scarcity of wood in the neighbourhood, carried many miles over the mountains to distant salt-pans. Some of the brine from the Berchtesgaden mine is boiled in the valley; and some carried by wooden pipes, roughly made from the trunks of trees, over twenty miles of mountain, two thousand feet above the level of the valley, to the flourishing little town of Reichenhall.

Having given these sober details for the benefit of those whom the author of *Lothen* calls the 'respectable aggregate,' I will now tell of my visit to the mine. After obtaining tickets of admission at the office, an unpicturesque red brick building on the bank of the beautiful Alm, I was ushered into a room where a number of other visitors were waiting. Here I was enveloped in a miner's costume—namely, a pair of excessively wide serge trousers; a jacket of the same material; a broad-brimmed felt hat; as to the donning of which I felt some reluctance, when I thought of the numbers of Germans whose heads it had prob-

ably adorned; and a small leather apron, which, contrary to custom, was put on behind, for reasons which will presently appear. My toilet had scarcely ended, when a door, over which was written 'Für Damen,' opened, and out walked half-a-dozen personages, whom I supposed to be members of the female sex. These beings were attired in white duck-trousers, of the most approved sailor cut; an upper garment which greatly resembled a serge frock-coat; and a jaunty little black velvet cap with blue stripes; not forgetting the aforesaid apron. The eldest seemed by far the least at home, her experiences of life evidently not enabling her to overcome the shyness which her strange costume occasioned. To the younger portion of the party, the affair seemed a great joke, demureness struggling with fun being amusingly depicted on their faces. One young lady in spectacles was, however, an exception; the severity with which she regarded the whole proceedings testified to her belonging to the respectable body of prudes.

She looked a lecture,
Each eye a sermon, and her brow a homily.

A lantern having been handed to each visitor, and a guide assigned, we entered the mountain by the Ferdinand Berg Shaft. For some distance, our road was up a narrow arched passage, cut through the solid rock, in which a tramway was laid, only broad enough for us to walk in single file. This passage, where the ascent was very gradual, was closed by a door and flight of steps. Here the rock ended, and the side and roof of the gallery were supported by beams of wood, between which the grains of salt sparkled in the mould. Many side-galleries were passed, all of which had their names—usually those of some distinguished local or national personage—engraved on marble slabs. We continued to get farther and farther into the mountain, the air becoming colder each yard we went, several large and disused chambers being passed on our way. Water was conveyed the whole distance by pipes, and occasionally it gushed with a mysterious murmur beneath our feet. At length, after walking for some distance through these passages, half-a-dozen steps led us on to a narrow platform, and we stood upon the edge of the See von Senna or Salz See. It was a scene which, without being awe-inspiring, was strange and weird in the extreme. At our feet lay an oval sheet of the blackest water, some sixty or seventy yards in length, and twenty or twenty-five in breadth, with a ceiling not more than eight feet in height. Round the sides of this dark and mysterious lake was a single row of miners' lamps, which threw a fitful and dismal glow over the oily-looking water. Here we waited for a few moments, till the splashing of an oar was heard, and gradually in the dim light

There hove a dusky barge,
Dark as a funeral scarf from stem to stern,

which a tall form slowly paddled towards us. In this mysterious boat, which turned out to be an extremely rickety old punt, the party embarked. The circle of lamps fastened to our leather girdles formed a curious sight as they threw an occasional gleam over the odd-looking costume, and the half-amused, half-frightened faces of the ladies. The

water heaved against the sides with an echoing roll; and as we approached the other end, it appeared suddenly to narrow, and form a rapid and swift stream, which upon a nearer view turned out to be a fountain. Here the boatman gave his craft a sudden turn, and we soon reached the landing-place, where, cap in hand, a miner waited to receive us. We now left the flooded chamber by a long flight of steps, which brought us to several places where the rock-salt had been excavated, our guide finally stopping at a door, in front of which two or three miners were lounging. Here a thick leather glove was handed to every gentleman; and the door being opened, one of the slides, or 'Rollen,' as they are called in German, about which we had heard so much, appeared below us. Inclined at an angle of 45 degrees was a smooth board, about twenty yards in length, on each side of which was a rounded piece of wood. And now the use of the apron appeared, for a miner having seated himself on the plank, with his legs over the poles, half-a-dozen of us placed ourselves behind him, and grasping a side-rope with the right, and holding the lantern in my left hand, we set off amid much laughter on a journey along the 'downward slope.' It was always easy to regulate the pace by holding more or less tightly to the rope; but giving our leader his head, we flashed to the bottom, as an American observed, 'like greased lightning.' Safely arrived, we waited for our guide and the ladies, who, after considerable hesitation at the top, and much giggling at the bottom, were safely restored to the arms of their several German papas. We were now in a narrow path, circular in form, with a wall on one side, and a rail on the other, overhanging what seemed a bottomless pit, in the darkness of which a few miners' lamps flickered like the lights on a winter's night of some distant village. Into this huge chasm we descended by another slide, and found it was a quarry from which the salt was being taken, though the workmen at the time were away for their mid-day rest. The salt lay in many large and small irregular pieces, which were piled up on every side ready for conveyance to the exterior: it was by no means pure, being much intermingled with gypsum and other foreign substances. From here a winding, upward path led us through more passages, till at length we halted before a picturesque little cell. At the door were some beautiful blocks, variously coloured, and round the archway twinkled a row of tiny lamps. Within was a solid block of the purest rock-salt, three feet square, illuminated by a lamp from behind, on which the initial F and a crown were engraved. In front was a small fountain, which sprinkled the salt with fairy-like showers. This pretty and tasteful little place was in commemoration of the visit of the emperor and empress to the mine. In some of the larger mines, more important works have been undertaken, such as chapels and banquet-halls, where once a year the miners meet to pray and feast. Our visit was now nearly over, for here two rude carriages were waiting, composed of one board to sit upon, and one on each side for our feet. Having seated ourselves on these rough vehicles, a miner set us in motion; and when we had got up sufficient impetus—for the tramways are all down hill—he jumped on in front; and down passage after passage, and round

corner after corner, we rushed through the darkness, for our lamps had soon gone out, till we again reached the sunny air, and stood once more by the side of the brawling Alm.

STRANGE DRINKS.

'MAN, being reasonable, must get drunk!' Many people accept that as an axiom who never heard the name of the poet who wrote it. On that head, the most forlorn and stupid of savages are at one with civilised folks; and some extremely curious, let alone nasty concoctions, does human ingenuity hit upon in its desperate desire to produce a beverage that will cheer and inebriate. The cocoa-nut tree is a great boon to thirsty man, giving the weary traveller a draught of pure water, rewarding the early riser with a cup of sparkling toddy, and delighting lovers of strong potations with its potent arrack. The first beverage is contained in the fruit; the less innocent ones are made from the sap of the tree. The operations of the Cingalese toddy-drawer are simple enough. He binds all the shoots bearing embryo nuts firmly together, cuts off the ends, and attaches beneath them an earthenware vessel holding about a gallon, and so leaves matters for four-and-twenty hours—from sunrise to sunrise. When the time is up, the chatty is lowered, emptied of its contents, and replaced; and so the process goes on, until the flow of sap is exhausted. The liquor thus obtained looks like milk and water, and tastes like soda-water and milk slightly flavoured with cocoa-nut. In a few hours, rapid acetous fermentation takes place, and by mid-day the sap becomes toddy, resembling a poor acid cider, and from this arrack is made by distillation. The same source supplies the subjects of the Rajah of Sarawak with their national beverage, which is kept in huge jars, and hospitably handed to all comers in cans, bottles, or cocoa-nut shells, whichever happen to be handiest. Mr Boyle says it looks like thin milk, and smells like five hundred negroes drunk in a slave-pen, while its flavour seems to be as unique as its smell.

'When first taken into the mouth, it suggests an idea of cocoa-nut milk gone very sour, and holding in solution a very considerable quantity of brown sugar and old cheese; when it reaches the throat, the agonised novice becomes aware of a hot and peppery flavour, causing him to believe that starch mingled with the finest cayenne must have a great share in the composition; and, finally, should it safely reach its destination, and the sufferer be compelled to put his head precipitately through the railings behind, he conceives with astonishing suddenness that he is waiting for the crisis in a rolling vessel at the change of the monsoons.'

When the Marquesans are in the humour for a drinking-bout, a number of boys are set to work preparing aroo, by squatting around a large bowl, and masticating cocoa-nuts, which they spit into the bowl when sufficiently chewed. Enough being

prepared, the vessel is filled up with fresh water, and stirred, and the pleasant mess left to settle, when the flowing bowl is passed about for the merry-makers to drain to the lees.

Another drink, in high esteem among the South Sea Islanders, is made in a similar manner from the ava-root, and ava-drinking forms an essential feature of all Feejean ceremonies. In Rewa, when the ava has been duly chewed, as the water is poured in, the expectant spectators, ranged in a semicircle round the chief operator, set up a howl, finishing off with a cry of '*Ai seou*.' Then the operator strains the liquid into an immense wooden bowl, singing all the while; his song being taken up by the company, who at the same time imitate his motions to the best of their ability, varying the performances at every important stage of the proceedings by clapping their hands. The brewage concluded, the drinking-cups are filled from one having a hole in it; over the hole the ava-maker placing a finger when dipping, withdrawing it to let the liquor run out in a stream. The drinking of the king's draught is followed by an extra loud clapping; that of an inferior chief by the exclamation: '*Sa madaa*!' (It is empty). After ava, his Rewain majesty rinses his mouth, lights his cigar, and takes his ease on his mat. The royal barber, not being permitted to touch anything with his hands, has to find a friend to hold the cup to his lips while he drinks his allowance. The royal ava-drinking at Somu-somu is equally ceremonious. Early in the morning, the king's herald or orator cries out in front of his house: '*Yango-na li ava*.' To this the people reply with loud shouts, meaning: 'Prepare ava.' The chiefs and principal men assemble immediately with their bowls and ava roots, which are handed over to the younger folks, while they have a palaver about things in general. The ava-preparers must have clean and undiseased teeth, and are liable to punishment if they are detected swallowing any of the precious juice. The chewing over, and the water poured on the ava, the herald draws out in the vernacular: 'Make the offering.' The ava is then strained through cocoa-nut husks—a tedious operation. Then the herald repeats his cry, and the chiefs join in the chorus. Somebody is despatched with the royal ava, and the company go on singing. The orator invokes their god, Tava Sava, and his companions implore their dead friends by name to watch over them. Then prayers are raised for the king's life, for rain, the arrival of ships, for riches, and life to enjoy them. The chorus, '*Mana endina sendina le*,' a sort of 'Amen, so be it,' is repeated again and again, each time in a higher pitch, until the force of human lungs can no higher go, when the performance ends in a general screech of '*O-ya-ye*!' which is taken up by the outer mob; and then the king drinks his ava, the chiefs clapping hands while he does so, and when he has finished, setting to work upon their own account, and afterwards to business with what soberness they may. No

one dreams of doing anything until the king has emptied his bowl; and if a visitor wishes to keep on good terms with his hosts, he must be careful not to do any work, or make any noise, until the ceremony has come to an end. The picorree of Guiana and the chica of Chili and Brazil, like ava and aroo, are produced by the masticatory process; the first named being a concoction of cassava-bread, saliva, and water; while the principal ingredient of the Brazilian chica consists of maize-dough, thoroughly chewed by a parcel of old women.

Among the many strange acquaintances made by M. du Chaillu was a drunken old chief named Olenga-Yombi, whose head-wife favoured the gorilla-hunter with the following account of her worthy husband's bringing up: 'When he was quite a child, Olenga-Yombi's father used to put him in a big bag, and carry him to the top of a high tree, where he plied him with the intoxicating palm-wine. Every day he repeated the dose, till the child came to like palm-wine better than his mother's milk, whereat the father was greatly delighted, because he wished him to be renowned when he was grown up for the quantity of palm-wine he could drink. "So you see, Chaillu, you must not be angry with him, for it is not his own fault." This frightful example was always going to the drink, on the drink, or sleeping off the drink, and must have furnished a nice text for the total abstiners of those parts, supposing they preferred their principles to their heads.

Genuine palm-wine is obtained from the palmyra palm, and is far superior to that of the cocoa-nut tree. As the trunk of the tree is too rough for hands and knees to be used in climbing, the wine-drawer adopts another mode of ascent. He passes round his body and the stem of the tree a hoop of bamboo, which serves to support his back. Pressing his feet firmly against the trunk, and grasping the hoop as firmly with his hands, he draws slightly forward, keeping his foot steady, and slipping the hoop up a little higher, advances a step or two with his feet; and so he goes up some fifty or sixty feet, till he reaches the leafy crown of the palm. He then bores a hole in the trunk, about half an inch deep, and inserts a leaf rolled up funnel-ways into it, the other end being inserted into the mouth of a calabash, which he sends down as soon as it is full. A tree will yield a quart of wine twice a day for a month; and if the hole is afterwards carefully stopped with clay, wine may be drawn from the same tree for many successive years. Captain Burton says the oil-palm yields the finest wine of all, a drink surpassing the best of cider. His Majesty of Dahomey, however, with an eye to the oil-trade, prohibits his subjects from drawing their liquor from this source, because, like the Kroomen, they fell the trees first; so that the thirsty souls of Whydah have to content themselves with bamboo-wine, tasting like soap-suds laced with vinegar.

Dr Livingstone found the Magenja of the Zambesi

the possessors of a grateful beverage, which satisfied the cravings of fever at one draught, and almost justified the advice of a friendly chief: 'Drink plenty of it, and as it gets in, it will drive the fever out.' This beer is made from vegetated grain dried in the sun, pounded into meal, and gently boiled. When a day or two old, it is fit to drink, and is then a pinkish, sweet, acidified liquor of the consistence of gruel. It only intoxicates when deep and long-continued potations are indulged in, and then even no permanently evil result follows, for the Maganja are, for Africans, a very long-lived race, although, in contempt of European sanitary notions, they never wash themselves unless by accident. Drinking is the one enjoyment of their existence, and the completion of a family brewing an occasion of merry-making. Sometimes a selfish couple will pretend to be ill, and shut themselves up in their hut until they have put away all their brewage; but they generally invite their friends, who in return praise the beer as so good that the taste reaches to the back of the neck, or declare it will make their stomachs cry 'Tobu, tobu, tobu!' at every step on the road home.

Abyssinian beer, known as *sona*, *tallah*, or *donna*, according to its quality and strength, is made by mixing *Dagbusha* flour into a dough, and leaving it two or three weeks to ferment, when the dough is made up into cakes and baked on hot iron. These are put into a large jar of water, with a mixture of barley-meal and water, and a small quantity of a bitter herb called '*geso*,' growing abundantly upon the plains. After remaining quiet for a few hours, the beer is considered fit for consumption. Mock, made from this beer by boiling it with eggs, honey, butter, and spice, is declared by a traveller to be a drink fit for the entertainment of the gods, when in the good old Abyssinian times they used to pay that land an annual visit. But the favourite beverage among our whilom foes is tedge or honey-wine, which was praised years ago by the Jesuit father Foncet as a delicious liquor, pure, clarified, and the colour of Spanish white wine. The process of manufacture is a simple one. To one part of wild-honey is added five or six parts of cold water; this is well stirred, and put into a narrow-mouthed jar, with a little sprouted barley, some *biccalo* or *taddoo* bark, and a few *geso* leaves. After three or four days' exposure in the sun, this ferments, and is generally drunk as soon as it has nearly lost its original sweetness, being even then a muddy sort of liquor. Mr Parkyns speaks disparagingly of it, and quotes Bruce against it; but the natives appreciate it highly, and drink inordinately of it when they have the chance. In Shoa, the manufacture of tedge used to be a royal monopoly, and it was not allowed to be sold in public. Of course it was to be procured by bribery, but even then Mr Johnson says the purchaser probably got the rations of some economically disposed guest of the king, who had poured his daily allowance into a large jar instead of drinking it. A superior sort, made for his Shoa Majesty's own use, was prepared by adding *kuloh-berries* (resembling our elder-berries) to the other ingredients, and allowing the liquor to be undrawn for some months. This was called '*barilla*,' from its being handed to guests in small Venetian bottles of green glass, the accidental breakage of which was a serious offence in the monarch's eyes. Mr

Henty, the war correspondent of the *Standard* newspaper, describes the taste of tedge as resembling a mixture of small-beer and lemonade made from mouldy lemons. With three comrades, he went into a native public-house at Abtegrat fair, and called for tedge. It was brought in a flask resembling a Lucca oil-flask, but rather flatter, and with a larger neck. As it did not hold more than half a pint, the hot and thirsty customers soon called for more, but were made to understand they must wait for it to be strained, an operation they witnessed with dismay. A large jar was brought in; the wife of the proprietor put a part of her very dirty garment over the mouth, and poured the liquor through it into the flask. Luckily, Mr Henty and his friends had learned not to be oversqueamish, and were able, spite of some qualms, to satisfy their thirst; he does not say whether the straining process improved the flavour of his honey-wine, or otherwise.

Beeson, a drink in high esteem in some parts of Africa, is made like tedge with honey, but in this case the only addition is some millet, the beverage being brought to perfection by being exposed for ten days to the action of the sun. The Soosooos extract a tolerably palatable liquor from '*yinying*' root, by burning it and infusing the ashes in water. The people of Unyon think it wasteful to eat the plantain. They bury the green fruit in a deep hole, and keep it covered with earth and straw until it ripens. It is then peeled and pulped into a large wooden trough, well mashed, and thoroughly stirred: in a couple of days it is fit for use. The Bulloms go a different way to work; they let the fruit ripen naturally, remove the skin, and bruise the rest in hot water. In twelve hours or so, this mixture is strained and bottled, being '*corked*' closely for a week, by which time it has become a beverage of moderate intoxicating power. The folks of Taboga find their wine all but ready-made. When the flower-stalks of the American agave begin to sprout, the heart of the plant is cut out, and the juice collects in an artificial well formed by the operation. One plant will yield as much as three pints a day for a month; and when the juice has fermented, it will cause intoxication, and the end of the collector is attained.

Dampier relates how his friend Laut, Rajah of Mindinao, with all his courtiers, got as drunk as swine upon rice-drink, which must have been a similar beverage to *saki*, beloved of the Japanese, who make it of all degrees of strength from that of weak wine to potent spirit; and much the same sort of thing as the Chinese *samshu*, and, in the opinion of Sir R. Alcock, quite as good or bad. Marco Polo, perhaps because he had not tasted it, is much more complimentary. He says: 'The greater part of the people of Cathay drink a wine made of rice and many good spices, and prepare it in such a way that it is more agreeable to drink than any other liquor. It is clear and beautiful, and makes a man drunk sooner than any other wine.' This is praise indeed. But of all curious drinks, commend us to *Ladakh* beer, which possesses the great merit of portability. It is made of parched barley, ground, mixed with rice and the root of an aromatic plant, pressed into a hard solid cake. When wanted, a piece is broken off, and thrown into a vessel of water to ferment. This resembles gruel in appearance, and has a sour spirituous smell. What a boon it would be to our

soldiers and sailors if the beverages of Bass and Whitbread could be thus solidified! Where is the inventive genius, not above taking a hint from the savage, who will make it possible to carry a pint or two of Burton ale or London porter in one's waistcoat pocket?

THE NEMESIS.

IN ELEVEN CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER VII.

'Though we are justices, and doctors, and churchmen, Master Page, we have some salt of our youth in us.'

THE eyes of Lady Lloyd sparkled with mischief and *espèglerie* when she met her husband at dinner that same evening. A solemn London butler superintended their repast: to him, as the meal progressed, Lady Lloyd addressed herself.

'Gibson, I hear Wilkins is laid up.'

'Yes, your la'ship.'

'What's the matter with him, anything serious?'

'No, your la'ship; only confused hoptics.'

Dick laughed. 'I'll get the receipt from him. I often want a good thing for an "ager."'

Sir Wyndham looked gloomily upon his wife and her brother; he had an idea they were laughing at him.

'Wyndham,' said Dick, 'I'd recommend you to employ a fellow I met the other day on the Caerleon coach. He was the horse-keeper, in fact; he told me he wanted a place—"Tired clean horseshes; too much plenty work; want to clean a gentleman'sh instead." Give him a trial till Wilkins is better.'

'Dick,' said Sir Wyndham, 'don't try to be funny: it's bad enough to listen to people who have to get a living by it.'

'I was never more serious in my life,' said Dick. 'Do you think I'd joke about such a solemn thing?'

'Did you find any fish in the lake, Dick?' said his sister.

'Only caught some little ones: there were some whoppers rising out of my reach.—You should have a boat put up there, Wyndham. I should often come and see you then.'

'Ah, well, I won't have a boat put there,' said Sir Wyndham drily.

'Do now: the *Nemesis*, for instance! By the way, I called at Williams' cottage as I came home. Oh, there was such a bobberation going on—Williams was flourishing his arms about, raving in good Welsh, and the house was full of people, and every time he stopped, they began to shout, and then he went on again worse than ever. He was more like a New Zealand chieftain urging on his tribe to the war-path, than a decent National schoolmaster with the fear of the inspector before his eyes.'

'What was it all about, Dick?'

'Why, somebody, it appears, has been insulting Hamlet, wanted to take him up for a robbery, or some such nonsense, and Hamlet gave him a good thrashing.'

'How jolly!' said Lady Lloyd.

'Hamlet, it seems, is gone to Henhafod for safety; and the whole bunch of them, as soon as Williams finished his speech, started off there, to give him a jubilation. Gad, they'll be drinking ale all night long in the big kitchen, and singing

Penillion and all sorts of fun. I'd have gone with them, only I thought you might keep dinner waiting for me.'

I don't think Lady Lloyd was much pleased to hear that Hamlet was at Henhafod; and I am certain Sir Wyndham didn't enjoy his dinner.

Dick did find his way to Henhafod that night; was nearly knocked on the head as a spy from the enemy's camp; but was rescued by Williams, and spent a happy evening playing chess with Mona. When the ladies of the family went to bed, the doctor, Hamlet, and he joined the party in the big hall-kitchen, where there was much quaffing of ale, and singing and shouting, and speech-making and recitation, till the small-hours of the morning grew apace. So far had passed the night, that Dick accepted the offer of a shake-down at Henhafod.

It was rather late when they met at breakfast. The doctor had been up for hours, had made up his medicines, and visited a patient miles away among the hills. He was a widower, and his daughter Catherine presided at the breakfast-table. Catherine had one of those classic faces you sometimes though rarely meet with among the Welsh: pure in outline, graceful in contour, lighted by mild dove-like eyes, set off with massive braids of golden hair. For all her loveliness, Dick didn't swerve from his adoration of Mona. He was a fair-haired, blue-eyed, young giant, and like mates not with like.

'Glorious news, glorious news!'—so spoke little Owen Davies, waving his conical white hat in the air, as he rushed into the breakfast-parlour at Henhafod.

'Sit down, man, sit down, and take some breakfast; your news will keep, I daresay.'

'Can't stop a minute. I left Llanstarmdy at three this morning, and I must be at Pontneuben to a committee meeting at noon. But who do you think we've got for a candidate? See here!' and he pulled from his pocket a paper wet from the printer's. 'Come, I'll give you three guesses.'

'John Bright,' 'Garibaldi,' 'Mr Spurgeon,' were the several guesses.

'Shame for you to be so dull: who but General Sir Arthur Bence Lloyd, K.C.B.'

'Bah!' said the doctor; 'one Lloyd is as bad as another.'

'Come, my friend, we'll beat the big house with their own weapons. See, doctor, where we have them. John Jones says to me: "Deed, Owen, I'd like to vote for you, but the master would turn me away from my farm." Diaoul! man, I say, and if he does, isn't the general the heir, and won't he give you a better when he comes to his own?'

'Sh—sh!' said the doctor; 'there's a young chap from the Hall yonder. But as for the general being the heir, that he isn't.—Come this way, Owen.—Hamlet, you come too.'

Owen Davies was shewn the certificate of marriage, told of the circumstances under which it was found, of the attempt which had been made to accuse Hamlet of stealing it.

'Very well,' said Owen; 'you shall make me solicitor in the cause. We'll first see Colonel Morgan, and let him know we're ready to appear before the bench whenever they like. I'll take charge of this paper: it's better out of Hamlet's hands. It's the beginning of the trail. Get me a sheet of paper, and I'll write to the chaplain—'

general, and ask where this Dowse is—the parson who has signed it. Let us find him, and we shall be all right.' Owen bustled out, but popped in his head once more.

'I've got another pill for the baronet, Wynn—a writ to serve: suit by the crown to establish their rights to foreshore; came out of that *Nemesis* affair.' But the doctor failed to appreciate this intelligence. He was a landed proprietor himself, and looked suspiciously on crown rights.

Hamlet was served that day with two summonses for the petty sessions, to be held a few days later. The petty sessions for the division of Aberavon were held in a little building on the outskirts of the village of Port Penllyn. The house of the resident police constable formed part of the building. There was, besides, a large room, railed off at one end for bench, solicitors, and officials of the court.

When Hamlet and his friends arrived at the court-house, they found the gravelled space in front covered with a crowd of men, women, and children. It was evident at once that Hamlet's cause was the popular one. There was a pattering fire of shouts, not rising to the height of an English cheer; the crowd divided spontaneously, and many hands were held out in friendly greeting. They were the first on the scene. The baronet's arrival was marked by a chorus of yells, groans, and hisses. A strong body of police escorted him to the private entrance of the court.

The crowd made a dash at Wilkins, but were stopped by the police. The room itself was crammed in every part with a perspiring, restless mass of humanity.

The charge of stealing was first taken, and after a little formal evidence, there was a slight skirmish between our friend Owen and the lawyer on the other side.

'We don't deny,' said Owen, 'that we did take a paper from Tanyrallt, but we found the paper in a swallow's nest.'

'Deed, that's true; I saw her myself,' cried a voice in the crowd.

'Silence!' roared the police; but Owen's quick eye had caught the speaker, a seafaring man of bronzed and weather-beaten face.

'Now,' said Owen, after the interruption, 'I propose, with the permission of the bench, to hand to them for their inspection this very paper, which I claim as the lawful property of my client.'

Sir Wyndham, who occupied a seat at one end of the sacred bench, here rose and whispered to his lawyer, who sat below.

'I object to go into that: we withdraw that charge,' said the solicitor hastily.

The bench looked at each other rather in a huffy way: they were a little disappointed perhaps.

'Extraordinary proceedings! Why do you bring the charge, if you don't mean to go on with it? Bring justice into contempt.'

'We are willing and anxious to go on with it, your worships,' said Owen loftily.

'I don't see,' said Sir Wyndham haughtily, 'that if I choose to withdraw from the prosecution, I am to be called to account for it.'

And then there arose a great quarrel on the bench, to the huge delight of Owen, who foresaw political advantages to be gained by the disunion of the swells.

The quarrel terminated at last, burned itself out,

as it were, for who could interfere in a contest between the gods? But it had this result: when the next case—the assault—was called on, the bench wouldn't listen to it. In vain poor Wilkins, who really had wrongs to be redressed, descanted on his bruises and scars.

'Serve him right!' said one.

'How dared you speak to a young gentleman in that way!' said another.

'We've a great mind to commit you for contempt of court!' said a third.

The end was that poor Wilkins was hustled out of the witness-box by a policeman.

'Charge dismissed,' said the magistrates unanimously. And then there arose an immense cheer from the populace. Somewhere or other, flags, which happened to be of the colour of the popular cause, were found and brought out. The horses were taken out of the doctor's wagonette; and the moment the doctor and Hamlet appeared, they were hoisted on the shoulders of the crowd, and carried round the village in triumph, finally being placed in their carriage, and drawn home by a shouting multitude.

Meantime, little Owen had collared the seafaring man with the gold-banded cap, and had a long conference with him over a jug of ale, in the little public hard by.

You may be sure that Williams the schoolmaster was at the court, and I fancy had a hand in the demonstration. He had given the children of Aber a holiday on the occasion. The boys of Aber loved a holiday—the era of youthful prigs who cry to go to school had not reached the Welsh coast; and once in a while, when Williams would be suffering from some passing ailment, and unable to teach, the joyful cry, 'The master's sick! the master's sick!' would fly along the narrow village street, and among the hovels perched on the rocky terraces above, quick as the electric spark, and all the youthful life of Aber would rejoice in its liberty. But even the shrill voices of the holiday-loving children were hushed, and the little knots of people who stood at the doors of shops, and on the steps of cottages, were silent as the schoolmaster passed down the street, smiling to himself, rehearsing in his mind the well-managed ovation of the day. They struck him oddly, the silent greetings of his friends; for none spoke to him, they only nodded kindly, and let him pass.

And when he entered his cottage-door, there met him the wise woman of the village, and a little behind, there stood his old friend the rector—and then he knew it all. His wife was dead.

Ah, not in king's houses, nor in mansions shaded by ancestral trees, nor in the well-garnished terraces of the respectabilities, nor in the marts and shops of busy traders—no, not there; but in the cottages of the hard-handed poor, where Want dogs the steps of Toil, shall you find the most blessed balm of all, the gracious sympathy of human kindred souls. Though, whether the cruel caustic or the soothing anodyne be best for griefs which tears and time can never quite efface, I do not know.

But to the poor schoolmaster thus stricken, left to wander on alone over the weariest part of life, there was much solace in the kind grasp of neighbours' hands. His wife was dead; but his mind could not yet take in all that was meant when they told him that.

CHAPTER VIII.

So to the churchyard they are bound,
Bearing the body on a bier,
In decency and humble cheer;
And psalms are sung with holy sound.

'O Dick, Dick, take me home with you!'

Dick Molyneux had come into his sister's room to say good-bye; he was coated and gloved for travelling; a dog-cart and horse stood at the Hall door, the horse pawing the gravel, and champing the bit impatiently.

'Home!' said Dick. 'Ain't you at home now?'

'O Dick, no! I want to go to my town home, and rest.'

'Well, now,' said Dick, rather annoyed, 'I call that a practical commentary on the vanity of human wishes. Here you have everything the heart can desire, and you would run away and leave it!'

'But, Dick, I'm so wretched—so miserable.'

'He isn't unkind to you, Bella, is he?' said Dick, nodding menacingly, indicating the master of the house.

'O no; not in that way. But, Dick, whisper—O Dick, I think he's mean.'

'Well,' said Dick, striking a wax-match and essaying to light his cigar, 'I think he is rather stingy. He might have put a boat on the lake for me. It wouldn't have cost him a tenner.'

'But, Dick, I don't mean that. Dick, I think he's mean at heart; and, Dick, the thought of being tied for life to a mean man, oh, it's enough to drive one mad! I shall do something wicked, Dick, I know, and I so long to be good—not goody, Dick, but good. Dick, dear boy, when you marry, don't go in for money. Find a girl who's got the right stuff in her. And yet, Dick, you ought to have money too, for you're a great feckless darling, and I'm afraid you'll never be a money-getter.'

'"Doant thou marry for munny, but goa wheer munny is!"' quoted Dick laughing. 'But I've settled the matter already; I'm going to marry Mona Wyndham, and she hasn't got a penny!'

'Dear Dick, you silly children! And what does she say to you?'

'Well, she won't say anything. But I mean to have her all the same!'

'And what'll papa say?'

'I reckon he will swear a few,' said Dick, relighting his cigar, which had gone out during his talk.

'Dick, I wish I could help you. I wish a woman could sell herself right out, and be paid for in advance. You should have all my purchase-money, Dick!'

'Hush, Bella; don't talk wicked. Keep your pecker up, dear old girl; it'll all come right in the end. Good-bye.'

Lady Lloyd didn't take much comfort from this. She watched the dog-cart whirling down the drive, and as she turned away, her great eyes swam over with tears.

The wind howled a melancholy refrain to her melancholy thoughts, and bore on its wings the melancholy tang of the church-bell, sounding fast. Two men were on the lawn mowing the freshly springing grass. She opened the window, and called to one of the men.

'Griffiths, what is the bell ringing for?'

'Well, your laddyship, it's the funeral to-day. The wife of schoolmaster Williams, your laddyship. Indeed, we should be very much pleased with your laddyship, if you'd get us leave to go to it. 'Deed, Andrews the gardener says we shan't go.'

'Go, by all means. I give you leave.'

And the men, shouldering their scythes, started off to put on their black coats.

Lady Lloyd took her water-proof wrapper and straw-hat—she would go to the funeral also.

Round the door of the schoolmaster's cottage at Aber were clustered a group of women and children. The open door revealed a houseful of sympathising neighbours. The village street was crowded thickly with men. Sturdy sea-farers, quaint old-world farmers, dapper shopkeepers, rough navvies from the railway works, all the tribe were there from near and far.

Presently the coffin was brought out; the rector in gown and bands came forth, and read a prayer over it. The pall was adjusted; the husband and the sons, grown men, earning their bread in English towns, took each a corner of the bier. The pastor of the dead woman, John Ewans, the Methodist, took the head of the procession, giving out a psalm in Welsh. The whole crowd took up the burden in a melancholy minor key, and they started towards the church of Aber, some two miles away. The road wound along under precipitous rocks, and across it blew the wind, carrying the sea-foam from the rising, raging tide. Flocks of the white foam hung to the pall, and relieved its blackness. All pressed quickly forward in an irregular, changing mass. Each man in his turn put his shoulder under a corner of the bier, relieving the then bearer; so that, before they reached the church, all had given their kinswoman a lift towards the grave. At the lych-gate, the husband and sons again took each a corner of the bier, and bore the body into the church.

It was a gray and gloomy Norman chapel, of deeply recessed south porch, the round arches of it adorned with zigzag and fillet mouldings, as was the bold chancel arch within. In olden time, when the dead chiefs of the land must lie within the holy walls of the monastery of the sacred island, in this little chapel the coffins rested, and the priests sang mass, till such times as the vexed seas, mindless of mortal dignities, suffered the bodies to be borne to their final resting-place.

The service well nigh ended, there is a pause. The husband and his sons walk up to the chancel to the altar. On a side-table they deposit their offerings, and then stand aside. And then there is a little pause, for it is now fit that the women should walk to the altar; but they all wait for Lady Lloyd, and she, unused to their customs, knows not what to do. But the wise old woman takes her by the arm, and guides her to the chancel, and there she deposits her golden gift; whilst among the old women in cloaks and steeple-hats there runs a murmur of praise and blessing for the beautiful wife of the Lord of Tanyralit. All the women then stream up to the altar with their gifts. The parson stands over the table with his book; the clerk assorta the money as it pours in. The women finished, the men flock to the altar in their turn. The parson, then, from the chancel-steps announces the amount of the offering. The largeness of the sum is a criterion of

the respect in which the deceased is held. The body is borne to the grave by the mourners, the last sad but hopeful words are said, and as the mould rattles on the coffin-lid, the grief of the women bursts out beyond control. Throwing themselves into each other's arms, they raise their voices in loud lamentations. All file round the grave, taking a last look at the coffin; the dissenting minister again gives out a psalm; the parson, having taken off his surplice, joins in the chant; and all depart.

As they walk back to Aber, Hamlet, who has been one of the chief mourners, and has stood by the table in the chancel with his old guardian, takes Owen Davies, the lawyer, by the arm.

'Do you know, Owen, I have had a great surprise to-day?'

'Why, what is it, my boy?'

'You know Gwen Jones, the old woman who, I've heard, used to be the nurse at the Hall? She was at the funeral to-day; and as I stood by the table, I saw her throw into the box a coin. It was a rusted old coin; but I noticed it had four holes in it, and of a sudden there flashed upon me a remembrance of where I had seen this coin, or one like it. It was in the centre of a chain of coins, and round the neck of a lady, I dimly remember and believe to have been my mother.'

'We'll see the parson, and look over the coins, and I will take care to see old Gwen, and draw from her what she knows. I ought to have thought of that before. Fair play to me, though: I've been working hard for you. 'Deed, they gave poor Mrs Williams a good offering.'

'Queer custom that,' said Hamlet.

'It's been so ever since I can remember, and a good while before, I daresay. The queerest offering I ever recollect I saw once when I was a boy in Anglesey. The parson there had a quarrel with the farmers about the tithe. He wanted to tithe potatoes, and the farmers wouldn't stand it; and they went to law about it, and I think he won. But the next funeral there was, every man in the parish attended, with his pockets full of potatoes; and when they made the offering, instead of money, they chucked these potatoes on to the table. Deuks! the parson was nearly smothered in potatoes.'

'What a melancholy joke?' said Hamlet.

'It wasn't a joke at all for the parson. There was never a man in the parish would carry them off for him; and he and his clerk had to put them in sacks, and take them away on their backs in the night.'

'It was something like the Sabines and the Roman women,' said Hamlet.

'Deed, they're all Romans at heart, the parsons now, I think; but this one here isn't a bad sort. Come along, Hamlet; we'll go in and have a glass of ale with him, and look for the old coin.'

They found it amongst the offerings—a gold Venetian coin: it had an inscription cut upon it in Indian characters.

'This looks like business,' said Owen. 'Come along, Jones; come with me to the old woman's cottage. If we don't get out of her what she knows—well, the law or the gospel will be to blame, that's all.—Hamlet, I'll drive round by Henhafod this evening, and you shall hear what evidence I've got together.'

The family at Henhafod had all gathered round

the lamp on the big table in the drawing-room. Catherine was reading aloud, and the other girls were working or drawing. Hamlet alone was sitting by the fireside, musing alternately in gloom or in gladness. The door was bounced open, and little Owen entered, his face beaming.

'Well, I've good news for you, Hamlet.'

'Oh, do tell us!' cried the girls in a breath, clustering round the lawyer, all but Catherine, who stood a little apart.

'Now, girls, don't tear me to pieces. Stand all aside; and you, Hamlet, come here. We've made old Gwen confess what she took from your father's—hem—from your father. The coins she has parted with, but she has kept the purse and a paper.' He held up the purse—an old-fashioned bag-purse, made of pigskin. 'Now, this paper may be of importance or not: we can't make it out. Here, there are jotted down several memoranda: "Dr. H. J. Co. 20; 3 P. C. 10; B. S. 10; I. 5 p. c. 10."'

Hamlet looked at the paper eagerly, and then blankly at the lawyer.

'I should say only a memorandum of investments: 3 Per Cents; Bank Stock; India 5's; that's all.'

'All, indeed; but that may lead to a good deal. But you haven't explained the top letters.'

'H. J. C. No; I can't see that; some kind of security, I'll be bound.'

'Let me see,' said Catherine, looking over the lawyer's shoulder. 'Is there any bank which does business with India?'

'Get the almanac, child; quick. "London bankers: Harvey, Jones, & Co." You've hit it, my dear girl.—Hamlet, get your hat. We must be in London by the time the bank opens to-morrow morning; and I've got a committee meeting to attend at nine the day after. Never mind; I'll bring the general down with me, and kill two birds with one stone.'

Mona ran to put some things into her brother's portmanteau.

'Get us to the station in time for the night-mail, and I'll give you a sovereign,' cried the lawyer to the driver of the car which was waiting in the dark avenue of Henhafod. Away went the car into the black darkness. Catherine threw her slipper after it, when no one was looking, and then hobbled into the avenue to pick it up again, the sharp stones cutting her poor shoeless foot.

CHAPTER IX.

'Put money in thy purse.'

The banking-house of Harvey, Jones, & Co. was not a palace in Lombard Street, with glass doors always on the swing, where gold in shovels-full, and notes in big bundles, are passing backward and forward over the counter. No; it was a quiet house, in a shady City court—a mansion formerly, of the eighteenth century. A rustic basement, with two stories of different orders over it; the architraves and mouldings adorned in the florid style of the renaissance, crowned by an attic surmounted by statues of heathen gods: such the house, as well as I can describe it. Entering, you come into a noble hall, and see before you a broad staircase, with richly carved balusters. In the hall, a porter of most aristocratic mien, dressed in spotless black, with frilled shirt-

bosom, will answer your inquiries; will wave you to the banking department to the right, should you be fortunate enough to have a cheque to draw—few under four figures cross the counter at Harvey's—or, should you be of sufficient weight to be received by the heads of the firm, he will graciously conduct you to the left, to their well-furnished rooms. Is it, I wonder, from an instinct of self-preservation that the two jolly, genial old gentlemen who represent the existing interests of the Harveys and Joneses have surrounded themselves with such a cordon of impassive clerks, stern cashiers, haughty junior partners, and evasive hall-porters? Perhaps so. At all events, you will find it easier to obtain an unauthorised interview with—the Chancellor of the Exchequer, say—than with the two chiefs of Harvey, Jones, & Co.

But, although impregnable to all ordinary attacks, although capable of enormous dissimulation, there was one thing which the Machiavellic hall-porter was not on his guard against; so he fell. No; he never could have expected that a little fiery man, wearing a conical white hat, a brown paper parcel under his arm, and a Welsh tweedy look about him generally, should pounce upon him like a hawk, take him by the arm, and say to him: 'Come, gwassay, take me to Mr Jones directly, in a minute.'

Afterwards, the porter consulted Mr Westerman, the corresponding clerk, who spoke sixteen languages, as to the meaning of gwassay; and when he ascertained it was not to be found in any of the languages Westerman knew, he shook his head, and said, he felt sure at the time the man was not of this world.

'It was the gwassay as upset me, Mr Westerman. To think, after being with the house from boy to man, that a little fiery-faced chap, in a hat as never was made in this world, Mr Westerman, should ketch hold of me by the arm, and call me gwassay! I was that upset, that I'd have done anything he told me!'

Thanks to his impetuous onslaught, Owen Davies found himself at once in the sanctum of Mr Jones the banker.

He, a fresh-looking, gray-haired, old gentleman, dressed in a snuff-coloured shooting-coat and gray small-clothes, was sitting in an arm-chair by the fire, when the apparition which had startled the porter out of his stately impassibility, burst in upon him. To the old gentleman, surveying him in astonishment through a double gold-rimmed eyeglass, Owen spoke.

'I must apologise for troubling you, Mr Jones, but my name's Owen Davies, and I'm a solicitor from Llanstardny, and I must speak to you on a matter of great importance.'

'Ah!' said the old gentleman, confused, but relieved; 'then it's law. Our solicitors are Grind and Grumble, of Abchurch Lane. I don't know what the porter was about, not to send you to the right persons.'

'But, Mr Jones, I don't want to see your lawyers. I'm acting for a couple of orphan children, who've not got a penny in the world.'

'Ah, if it's a matter of charity, please go to Mr Brown: he looks after the charities of the house.'

'It isn't charity either, Mr Jones. All I want is—information: knowledge which I believe you can supply, but which, as it's out of the usual course of business, I shall only obtain from the

fountain-head. I rely on your well-known integrity and kindness, to give me a hearing in the matter.'

'If you put it in that way, Mr—Davies, did you say?—I must listen, I suppose, though really my time'—

'I won't delay you five minutes.'

Owen sat down by the table, produced a bundle of papers, told the story of the wreck of the *Nemesis*, and of the children who survived, in a few words.

'Now, from a memorandum belonging to the deceased John Lloyd, we have reason to believe that he was a customer or client of your house, and we ask you to give us what information you can about him.'

'I really shall be very glad.—John Lloyd—let me see—yes. I certainly think we have a customer of that name: but I'll send for Mr Jacobs, who is the head of that department.'

Mr Jacobs, a tall, bolt upright, solemn-looking man, appeared.

'Mr Jacobs, can you give this gentleman any information as to a Mr John Lloyd, a customer of ours, who, he says, was drowned in the *Nemesis* some six years ago?'

'Drowned! Bless me, no! The account is still open—impossible he can be drowned.'

Owen's face fell a little.

'Can you assure me on that point? Can you tell me the date of the last transaction you had with John Lloyd?'

'You'd better send for the ledger-clerk, Jacobs,' said the old gentleman.

The ledger-clerk came with his big book.

'Will you refer, Mr Scroop, to John Lloyd's account-current, and tell us when it was last dealt with?'

'The last credit is the 20th ultimo,' said Mr Scroop.

'There, you see, Mr David! Impossible that the story can be correct—impossible that Mr Lloyd should have been drowned six years ago.'

The old gentleman looked at Owen doubtfully, as though with 'Police' in his eye.

'Will you allow me to explain,' said Mr Scroop. 'I believe these credits are proceeds of dividends which we receive by power of attorney for Mrs Lloyd. There is no debit for a much longer period.'

'Ah! is that so? Then, when was the last draft made?'

'I shall have to refer to former ledgers to ascertain that,' said the clerk. He went out to search the books—Owen sitting fevered with doubt and impatience. The clerk entered with a slip of paper. 'The last debits to the account are bills drawn in favour of Chetsee and Chuboy, Surat, in 185—, and just seven years ago.'

'Dear me, Mr Jacobs! shouldn't this have been brought under the notice of the house?'

'The house has never been in the habit of quarrelling with people for keeping money with them too long,' said Mr Jacobs tartly.

'Well, well; perhaps not.—Well, do you know,' said Mr Jones, turning briskly to the lawyer, 'it really seems very likely our Lloyd and yours are the same. Now, we generally find the best way of dealing with these matters is—a friendly suit—Grind and Grumble, Grind and Grumble—they're your men. We'll throw no obstacles in the way.

Grind and Grumble, left-hand side Abchurch Lane. Can't miss them, my dear sir.—Really, my time'—

'I told you before, I'm concerned for John Lloyd's two orphan children, who've no money to spare for lawsuits, whether friendly or not; and I ask you, as a gentleman and man of honour, to tell us what you know of your customer; through what means you were introduced to him; any facts, in short, which will throw light upon his career. Surely you have papers, securities—something that will help us?'

'Dear me; it's quite out of course. Indeed, I don't know whether, as bankers, we are justified in giving any information as to our customers, except under pressure of law. But, as you say, the circumstances are peculiar.—Mr Jacobs, have we any papers of Mr Lloyd's?'

'Please, refer, Mr Scroop, and bring them here.'

Mr Scroop presently reappeared, bearing an iron box. He placed it before Mr Jacobs, who unlocked it, and turned over the papers.

'Railway debentures, canal shares, and so on: nothing private. Yet stay; here is a bundle. "Papers to be opened at my death."—Shall we open them, Mr Jones?'

There was a little pause of stillness, in which might be heard the ticking of the clock on the marble chimney-piece.

Mr Jones fidgeted in his chair. 'Really, I don't know. No proof of death; and yet, as you say, Mr Owen, circumstances are very peculiar.—Yes, open the packet, Mr Jacobs.'

'The contents of the packet,' said Mr Jacobs in his slow precise way, 'are a paper endorsed "Last Will and Testament;" another paper marked "Particulars of Marriage;" and a third, "Memoranda of Children's Birth." That's all. Shall I read the will?'

'Yes; go on,' said the old gentleman. His curiosity and interest were now excited. 'Read the heads of it at least, not all the rigmarole.'

'Perhaps,' said Owen, 'as a lawyer, I shall be able to pick out the sense of the matter better than Mr Jacobs.'

'So you will. Read it out—read it out!'

'This will,' said Owen, throwing a rapid glance over it, 'bequeaths legacies of ten thousand each to the uncle of testator, Arthur Bence Lloyd; to his father, John Lloyd, the same amount (that's lapsed, by the way); to his daughter, Mona, fifty thousand; to his son, John Mohammed, fifty thousand; a thousand each to his executors, John Knight Jones, banker, and Arthur Bence Lloyd, of the Royal Artillery, on condition they act. The residue to his only son, John Mohammed aforesaid; and that's all,' said Owen, folding up the paper, his face beaming with delight.—'And now, my dear Mr Jones, I'll thank you to prove that will without a moment's delay.'

'What's the balance?' whispered Mr Jones to his junior partner.

Mr Jacobs pushed over a little slip, on which was written 'Fifty thousand pounds. The estate is worth two hundred and fifty thousand pounds.'

'Bless my soul; as you say, Mr Davids, as the circumstances are most peculiar—Where is my young ward?—You must come and dine with me—come and dine with me—eight o'clock—Berkeley Square. Bring him with you: talk it over then.'

'Excuse me, Mr Jones; but I've not a minute

to spare. I've a committee meeting at nine to-morrow morning in Wales; and I've to be at the House of Commons at seven to-night: I really can't dine with you.'

'Well, well, let the boy come—let the boy come. Dear me, I must talk all this over with Mrs Jones.'

Hamlet had been waiting impatiently in the hall of the bank, feeling himself very much ill-used that he should have so to wait. When the lawyer came out, flushed and excited, he seized Hamlet by the arm, and hurried him on till they came to a corner public-house, and then into the private department of jugs and bottles. 'Well,' said Owen, 'it's been a thirsty business.—My dear, bring two glasses of ale.'

Hamlet had been too proud to ask any questions before. 'What have you done?'

'Well, my boy, I've got you acknowledged heir to two hundred thousand pounds: there's for you!'

'But what about my birth; have you found out anything about that?'

'Dialect! I tell a man he's worth nearly a quarter of a million, and he asks about his birth! But that's all right, Hamlet. Nay, I shouldn't call you Hamlet any longer! John, seventh baronet of Tanyrallt, Good Health! We'll have another glass on the strength of it!'

A LAST LOOK.

Good-night, pretty sleepers of mine—

I never shall see you again:

Ah, never in shadow nor shine;

Ah, never in dew nor in rain!

In your small dreaming-dresses of white,

With the wild-bloom you gathered to-day

In your quiet shut hands, from the light

And the dark you will wander away.

Though no graves in the bee-haunted grass

And no love in the beautiful sky

Shall take you as yet, you will pass,

With this kiss, through these tear-drops. Good-bye.

With less gold and more gloom in their hair,

When the buds near have faded to flowers,

Three faces may wake here as fair—

But older than yours are, by hours!

Good-night, then, lost darlings of mine—

I never shall see you again:

Ah, never in shadow nor shine;

Ah, never in dew nor in rain!

On Saturday, 2d July, will be commenced the first portion of an ORIGINAL NOVEL, entitled

BRED IN THE BONE.

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